

CLAIMS

1. A method of heating toner of an image on a moving surface of an intermediate transfer member in order to transfer the image to a printing medium of a printing system comprising:

providing a toner image on an intermediate transfer member; and

placing a surface of a heated member in contact with said image on said intermediate transfer member, prior to transferring the toner image to a further surface from the intermediate transfer member,

wherein heating of the image by the contacting heated member is in addition to heating by a heater, internal to said intermediate transfer member.

2. A method according to claim 1 and including;

moving the surface of the heated member together with the moving surface of the intermediate transfer member, so that the heated member surface comes into contact with the intermediate transfer member surface.

3. A method according to claim 2 and including:

removing the surface of the heated member from contact with the intermediate transfer member.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein said heated member comprises a cylindrical drum contacting said intermediate transfer member, arranged such that portions of the intermediate transfer member surface contact portions of the heated surface and then are separated therefrom by motion of the intermediate transfer member and rotation of the heated member.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein said heated member comprises a belt contacting said intermediate transfer member, arranged such that portions of the intermediate transfer member surface contact portions of the heated surface and then are separated therefrom by motion of the intermediate transfer member and motion of the heated member.

6. A method according to claim 1 and including removing excess carrier liquid from the image prior to its transfer to the intermediate transfer member.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein said heated member supplies at least 50% of the heat for heating the toner of the image on said intermediate transfer member.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein said heated member supplies at least 70% of the heat for heating the toner of the image on said intermediate transfer member.

9. A method according to claim 1 wherein the internal heater is a radiant heater that heats the intermediate transfer member by heat radiated and air conducted from the heater.

10. A method according to claim 1, and including transferring the heated image from the intermediate transfer member wherein heating the toner image to a temperature suitable for transfer to a final substrate uses less than 50% of the energy necessary to heat said toner to said suitable temperature by a heater internal to the intermediate transfer member alone.

11. A method according to claim 1 wherein the image is transferred from the intermediate transfer member, under pressure.

12. A method according to claim 1 wherein the intermediate transfer member comprises a drum on which an intermediate transfer blanket is mounted or a belt.

13. A printing method comprising:

heating a toner image according to the method of claim 1; and

transferring the still hot toner image to a final substrate.

14. A system for heating a toner image for printing on a print media comprising:

an intermediate transfer member, adapted to receive an image at a first position and to transfer the received image at a second position; and

a heating member contacting said image and said intermediate transfer member as it passes between said first and second positions,

wherein heating of the image by the contacting heated member is in addition to heating by a heater, internal to said intermediate transfer member.

15. A system according to claim 14 wherein the heating member is a heated rotating drum.

16. A system according to claim 14, wherein the heating member is a heated moving belt.

17. A system according to claim 14 and including means for removing excess carrier liquid from the image prior to its transfer to the intermediate transfer member.

18. A system according to claim 17, wherein the intermediate transfer member comprises a drum on which an intermediate transfer blanket is mounted or a belt.